

Message Text

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INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
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USEEC

PARIS ALSO FOR OECD
VIENNA FOR USIAEA

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, EEC
SUBJECT: PROSPECTS FOR AN EC ENERGY POLICY

REF: (A) 77 BRUSSELS 18820 (B) BRUSSELS 4807
(C) 77 LONDON 20394 (D) LONDON 3989

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE DISAPPOINTING DECEMBER 13
ENERGY COUNCIL (REF A) AND THE DECISION TO CANCEL THE
MARCH 21 ENERGY COUNCIL (REF B), MANY EC COMMISSION AND
PERMDEL OFFICIALS FEAR THAT A VIRTUAL "STALEMATE" HAS
BEEN REACHED IN REGARD TO ADOPTION OF ENERGY POLICIES AND
PROGRAMS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL. AGREEMENT ON ANY ENERGY
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PROPOSALS BEFORE THE EC COUNCIL HAS PROVEN IMPOSSIBLE
SINCE OCTOBER 1977 FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, INCLUDING A
BASIC CONCERN BY SOME STATES THAT SUCH MEASURES IMPINGE
ON NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, ARE OF CONSIDERABLE DISADVANTAGE
TO THEM, OR ARE OF NO DIRECT BENEFIT. SOME OBSERVERS
BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY THE
MAY ENERGY COUNCIL MAY APPROVE SOME PENDING MEASURES,

INCLUDING FINANCIAL AIDS FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY, IF THESE CAN BE SEPARATED FROM AN ENERGY "PACKAGE" PUT TOGETHER BY THE DANISH PRESIDENCY FOR SIMULTANEOUS APPROVAL. END SUMMARY.

2. LACK OF PROGRESS IN APPROVING COMMUNITY-WIDE ENERGY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS ARE ATTRIBUTED TO SEVERAL CAUSES. STATES WHICH POSSESS ENERGY RESOURCES OR HAVE INSTITUTED NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS SEE LITTLE NEED FOR COMMUNITY POLICIES WHICH WOULD REDUCE NATIONAL CONTROL OVER THESE ENERGY RESOURCES. SOME STATES ARE OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE EXTENSION OF COMMUNITY COMPETENCE TO AN AREA WHERE IT DOES NOT NOW EXIST AND WHICH IS AS VITAL TO NATIONAL WELL-BEING AS THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF ENERGY. SOME STATES UNDOUBTEDLY FEEL THAT EMERGENCY MEASURES IN THE EVENT OF A NEW ENERGY CRISIS AND CONTINUING NON-BINDING HARMONIZATION OF ENERGY MEASURES CAN BEST BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE IEA, OR--IN THE CASE OF PETROLEUM--THROUGH THE MULTINATIONAL OIL COMPANIES. ALL MEMBER STATES SEEM PREPARED TO HOLD APPROVAL OF ENERGY MEASURES OF NO DIRECT INTEREST TO THEMSELVES AS "HOSTAGE" FOR ADOPTION OF THE MEASURES THEY DO DESIRE.

3. MANY COMMISSION AND PERMDEL OFFICIALS BLAME THE UK
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PRIMARILY FOR THE FAILURE OF THE EC TO AGREE ON THE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF A COMMON ENERGY POLICY. IN PART, THIS RESULTS FROM THE FACT THAT IN PROTECTING ITS COAL, GAS AND OIL RESOURCES FROM COMMUNITY ENCROACHMENT, THE UK APPEARS TO BE BLOCKING A LARGE NUMBER OF IMPORTANT MEASURES. CONTINUED UK INSISTENCE FOR FURTHER STUDIES AND CONSULTATIONS IS TAKEN BY MANY AS AN EXCUSE TO PREVENT APPROVAL OF ENERGY POLICIES. DESPITE APPARENT UK OPPOSITION TO ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON ENERGY POLICY (REFS C AND D), SOME OFFICIALS ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE DOGGED ITALIAN REFUSAL TO BUDGE ON SOME ISSUES UNTIL PROGRAMS BENEFITING ITALY ARE APPROVED (E.G., EC REFINERY POLICY) OR GERMAN RELUCTANCE TO APPROVE EC-FINANCING FOR PROJECTS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN GERMANY ARE JUST AS OBSTRUCTIVE. BRITISH OPPOSITION TO SOME ENERGY MEASURES IS MADE MORE VISIBLE BY THE ATTITUDE OF UK MINISTER FOR ENERGY, ANTHONY BENN, WHO SEEMS TO GO OUT OF HIS WAY IN COUNCIL MEETINGS AND IN PUBLIC TO SHOW DISDAIN FOR THE COMMUNITY. AN EXAMPLE WAS HIS REFUSAL TO DISCUSS THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL ON OIL REFINERIES DURING THE DECEMBER ENERGY COUNCIL ON THE GROUNDS THAT IN THE PREVIOUS SIX MONTHS HE "HAD NOT YET HAD TIME" TO DISCUSS

IT WITH BRITISH LABOR UNIONS.

4. IN AN EFFORT TO OVERCOME THESE OBSTACLES, DENMARK IS TRYING A NEW STRATEGY IN THE ENERGY AREA FOR 1978. THE INITIAL EC APPROACH TO PLACE ALL ENERGY MEASURES INTO A "PACKAGE" WHICH WOULD PROVIDE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE, FAILED WHEN IT WAS POSSIBLE IN EARLY 1976 TO ENACT THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM NOMINALLY APPROVED BY THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AT THE ROME EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF DECEMBER 1975. THE NEXT APPROACH ADOPTED BY FORMER ENERGY COMMISSIONER SIMONET TO SELECT FROM A "MENU" OF INDIVIDUAL ENERGY MEASURES THOSE THAT APPEAR "RIPEST" FOR ADOPTION WAS MORE SUCCESSFUL AND HAS BEEN LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROGRESS IN 1976 AND 1977. MANY OF THESE MEASURES, HOW-
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EVER, WERE EITHER NOT PARTICULARLY CONTROVERSIAL, BENEFITED ALL MEMBER STATES (LIKE THE TWO ENERGY CRISIS

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MANAGEMENT MEASURES) OR WERE PART OF A LARGER "TRADE OFF"

(E.G., EURATOM LOANS FOR SITING THE JET THERMO-NUCLEAR PROJECT). SOME OF THE REMAINING MEASURES MAY BE HARDER NUTS TO CRACK.

5. THE DANISH STRATEGY IS A COMPROMISE BETWEEN THESE TWO EARLIER APPROACHES AND CONSISTS OF FORMULATING A SMALL "BALANCED INTEREST PACKAGE" LINKING FIVE MEASURES TOGETHER WHICH PROVIDE SOME BENEFITS TO ALL MEMBER STATES AND ARE TO BE ADOPTED MORE OR LESS SIMULTANEOUSLY. THESE ARE: THE EC STEAM COAL EXPORT SUBSIDY SCHEME (INTENDED TO SATISFY PRIMARILY THE UK); PROPOSALS TO HELP RESOLVE THE EC PETROLEUM REFINERY DIFFICULTIES (TO SATISFY ITALY AND FRANCE); AND EC GRANTS FOR THREE PROGRAMS FOR DEMONSTRATION ENERGY SAVING PROJECTS (\$180 MILLION PROPOSED), DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY (AMOUNT INDEFINITE), AND HYDROCARBON EXPLORATION (\$29 MILLION PROPOSED). THESE THREE PROGRAMS ARE OF POTENTIAL BENEFIT FOR ALL MEMBER
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STATES DEPENDING UPON PROJECTS SELECTED AND WHICH STATES BEAR THE LARGEST SHARE OF PROGRAM COSTS.

6. DESPITE DANISH AMBASSADOR RIBERHOLT'S STRONG PERSONAL INTEREST IN MAKING PROGRESS IN THE ENERGY AREA DURING THE DANISH PRESIDENCY IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1978, DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEMBER STATES ON THIS PACKAGE ARE PREVENTING ITS ADOPTION. NON-COAL PRODUCERS OPPOSE THE STEAM COAL SUBSIDY, AND GERMAN SUPPORT IS WEAK BECAUSE THE MEASURES ARE DEEMED OF LITTLE PRACTICAL VALUE. UK OPPOSITION TO THE OIL REFINERY PROPOSAL IS STRONG, AND THE UK IS JOINED BY IRELAND IN OPPOSING EC MEASURES TO PREVENT NEW REFINERY CONSTRUCTION, AND BY THE DANES, DUTCH AND GERMANS IN OPPOSING REGIMENTATION AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL OF THE PETROLEUM PRODUCT IMPORT AND REFINERY MARKET. IN CONTRAST, ITALY (WITH FRENCH SUPPORT) HAS REQUESTED EVEN STRONGER COMMUNITY CONTROLS OVER PRODUCT IMPORT AND THE OIL INDUSTRY IN GENERAL. ITALY ALSO DESIRES FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO CLOSE REFINERIES AND TO CONSTRUCT CONVERSION UNITS WHILE GERMANY AND THE UK BELIEVE THESE SHOULD BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OIL INDUSTRY ITSELF. SOME STATES SUGGEST THE REFINERIES PROBLEM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED UNDER EC INDUSTRIAL POLICY, NOT ENERGY POLICY.

7. THERE IS NOW SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT ON THE THREE FINANCIAL AIDS PROGRAMS EXCEPT THAT SOME STATES (NOTABLY THE UK AND GERMANY) ARE INSISTING ON REDUCTIONS OF THE LEVEL OF EC FUNDING AND WANT TO LIMIT THE COMMISSION'S ROLE IN SELECTING PROJECTS AND TO GIVE THE MEMBER STATES VETO RIGHTS OVER PROJECTS. UK'S MINISTER BENN IS PARTICULARLY OPPOSED TO IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD

INCREASE THE COMMISSION'S POWER. THE UK AND GERMANY BOTH
BELIEVE THE OIL EXPLORATION PROJECT IS A WASTE OF
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COMMUNITY FUNDS FOR ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH THE OIL COMPANIES
HAVE ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES. ALTHOUGH PART OF A
"PACKAGE" TO BE APPROVED AS SUCH, SEVERAL OBSERVERS
BELIEVE THAT IF SUFFICIENT PROGRESS IS MADE IN THE NEXT
FEW WEEKS TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES ON AT LEAST THE FIRST
TWO OF THESE THREE PROGRAMS AND IF THE DANES AGREE TO
SEPARATE THEM FROM THE COAL SUBSIDY AND OIL REFINERY
IMPROVEMENT PROPOSALS (BOTH UNLIKELY OF APPROVAL), THESE
TWO PROPOSALS STAND A GOOD CHANCE OF BEING ADOPTED BY
THE ENERGY COUNCIL AT THE END OF MAY.

8. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OTHER PENDING MEASURES ON THE
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM FOR 1978 WHERE AGREEMENT HAS STILL
NOT BEEN POSSIBLE. THESE ARE NOT LINKED FORMALLY TO
OTHER MEASURES AND COULD BE APPROVED ON AN INDIVIDUAL
BASIS WHEN "RIPE". IN DESCENDING ORDER OF POSSIBILITY
OF APPROVAL, THESE INCLUDE:

(A) COMMUNITY ENERGY TARGETS FOR 1985: MOST
OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH PREVENTED APPROVAL OF THIS PROPOSAL
IN DECEMBER HAVE BEEN RESOLVED BY MAKING THE TARGETS LESS
COMPULSORY, SATISFYING DUTCH AND BRITISH SENSITIVITY
REGARDING THEIR PREROGATIVE TO SET NATIONAL DEPLETION
POLICIES FOR OIL, GAS AND COAL PRODUCTION, RECOGNIZING
THE VALUE OF COAL IMPORTS AS WELL AS INCREASED COAL
PRODUCTION TO REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON OIL IMPORTS, AND
LINKING EXPANSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY TO HELPING ASSURE
RESOLUTION OF SECURITY, ECOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR WASTE
DISPOSAL PROBLEMS. THE MOST IMPORTANT REMAINING
OBSTACLE IS AN ITALIAN RESERVATION LINKING THE MEASURE TO
THE EC REFINERY PROPOSAL. AGREEMENT IS BELIEVED POSSIBLE
IN MAY.

(B) ORTOLI LOAN FACILITY: ROUGHLY ONE HALF OF THE \$1.2
BILLION ORTOLI LOAN FACILITY APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE IN LATE
1977 IS EXPECTED TO BE EARMARKED FOR ENERGY PROJECTS.
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ALTHOUGH THE AMOUNT INVOLVED IS SMALL RELATIVE TO TOTAL
INVESTMENT NEEDS IN THE ENERGY AREA, THESE LOANS ON FAVOR-

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ABLE COMMERCIAL TERMS CAN ENCOURAGE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
MARGINAL PROJECTS. WHILE THE PROGRAM IS HELD UP BY DIFFER-
ENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES
ON THE DEGREE OF CONTROL THE EC COUNCIL SHOULD EXERCISE
OVER USE OF THESE FUNDS AND OTHER TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION
DETAILS, APPROVAL OF MODALITIES TO CARRY OUT THE PROGRAM
BY A FINANCE COUNCIL IS PROBABLE LATER THIS YEAR.

(C) THREE NUCLEAR ENERGY MEASURES: IN ADDITION TO A GENE-
RAL BUT UNSTATED RELUCTANCE BY SOME STATES (NOTABLY FRANCE
AND THE UK) TO THE EXTENSION OF COMMUNITY COMPETENCE OVER
SENSITIVE NATIONAL POLICIES ON NUCLEAR REPROCESSING AND
FAST BREEDER REACTORS, GENUINE DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN MEMBER
STATES MAKE COMMUNITY ENDORSEMENT OF EITHER OPTION AS PRO-
POSED BY THE COMMISSION UNLIKELY UNLESS IT IS DONE IN SUCH
A BLAND WAY AS TO ESSENTIALLY PERMIT EACH STATE TO DO AS IT
PLEASES. THERE IS LESS DISAGREEMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF
THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON THE PROBLEMS OF NUCLEAR WASTE
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DISPOSAL BUT LITTLE DESIRE TO AGREE TO A COMMUNITY PLAN

WHICH MIGHT CALL FOR STORAGE OF ONE COUNTRY'S NUCLEAR WASTE IN THE TERRITORY OF ANOTHER. THE MEMBER STATES APPEAR PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED FORMATION OF COMMUNITY COMMITTEES OF EXPERTS ON NUCLEAR WASTE AND ON NUCLEAR REPROCESSING.

(D) PETROLEUM RESERVES: FEW MEMBER STATES SEE ANY NEED FOR A COMMON POLICY TO REPLACE EXISTING BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS PROVIDING FOR STORAGE OF PETROLEUM PRODUCT RESERVES BY ONE MEMBER STATE IN THE TERRITORY OF ANOTHER. ALTHOUGH THE UK FAVORS THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL THAT DOMESTIC OIL PRODUCTION CAN OFFSET UP TO 40 PERCENT OF THE 90-DAY EC PETROLEUM PRODUCT RESERVE REQUIREMENTS, IT IS OBJECTING TO THE PROVISIONS THAT OTHER MEMBER STATES CAN ALSO REDUCE THEIR RESERVES TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY ARE RECEIVING PETROLEUM PRODUCED FROM WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. THE UK ALSO FEARS THAT THE REQUIREMENT THAT OIL DELIVERIES FROM AN EC OIL PRODUCING STATE (I.E., THE UK) MUST BE MAINTAINED IN CASE OF AN ENERGY CRISIS WILL RESULT IN SOME GUARANTEE OF PREFERRED ACCESS BY MEMBER STATES TO NORTH SEA OIL.

(E) FINANCIAL AIDS FOR STEAM COAL: SUBSIDIES FOR COAL STOCKPILES WHICH WOULD HAVE PRIMARILY BENEFITED THE UK AND GERMANY HAVE BEEN VIRTUALLY ABANDONED BECAUSE OF OPPOSITION BY ITALY AND OTHER STATES. SEVERAL OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ENCOURAGE CONVERSION OF THERMAL ELECTRIC POWER STATIONS FROM OIL TO COAL SHOULD LOGICALLY BE CONSIDERED SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE EC STEAM COAL EXPORT SUBSIDY, BUT CONTINUED CONFLICT AS TO WHETHER THE OBJECTIVE OF THE "COAL BURN" MEASURE SHOULD BE TO REDUCE OIL CONSUMPTION OR FURTHER EC COAL PRODUCTION MAKE ITS ADOPTION IN MAY UNLIKELY.

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(F) RATIONAL USE OF ENERGY: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RETROFITTING EXISTING BUILDINGS AND FOR STANDARDS FOR FIXED HEAT GENERATORS HAVE RUN INTO PROBLEMS WHICH WILL REQUIRE FURTHER STUDIES.

(G) PRICE OF ENERGY: THIS TOPIC WHICH IS CONCERNED LARGELY WITH VARIATION OF THE PRICES OF ELECTRICITY AND OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY IN DIFFERENT STATES WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE DISCUSSED INCONCLUSIVELY.

(H) PROTECTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF ENERGY INVESTMENT: AFTER SERIOUS EXAMINATION IN EARLY 1977 OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A COMMON POLICY TO ENCOURAGE AND PROTECT ENERGY INVESTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING POSSIBLY AN ENERGY MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE (MSP), THE UK IS NO LONGER URGING ADOPTION OF

MSP AND THERE IS LITTLE PRESENT ATTENTION TO ENERGY INVESTMENT PER SE EXCEPT AS A FUNCTION OF OTHER MEASURES SUCH AS FINANCIAL AIDS OR THE ORTOLI LOAN FACILITY.

9. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT THE MEMBER STATES WILL WISH TO ASSURE ADOPTION OF SOME ENERGY MEASURES AT THE MAY COUNCIL MEETING IN ANTICIPATION OF THE JULY SUMMIT MEETING AND TO SATISFY PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS, PARTICULARLY IF THE US ADMINISTRATION'S ENERGY LEGISLATION IS ENACTED BY THEN. THESE WILL PROBABLY CONSIST OF AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON FINANCIAL AIDS FOR ENERGY SAVINGS AND ALTERNATE SOURCES OF ENERGY AND ENERGY TARGETS FOR 1985. FOR THE FIRST TWO, DENMARK WILL HAVE TO AGREE TO ABANDON ITS BALANCED INTEREST PACKAGE APPROACH SINCE EARLY APPROVAL OF THE LINKED COAL EXPORT SUBSIDY AND OIL REFINERY PROPOSALS APPEARS UNLIKELY. ALTHOUGH MODEST RELATIVE TO TOTAL ENERGY INVESTMENT NEEDS, THE TWO FINANCIAL AID PROJECTS WILL BE A USEFUL ADDITION TO ANY MULTILATERAL EFFORTS TO STIMULATE GREATER ATTENTION TO ENERGY INVESTMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DECREASED DEPEND-

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